



From rules in the head to written rules.

Guidelines for the work of the EURA and LOGOPOL working group, which has been conducting surveys of local political actors for over twenty years

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Preface

The working group has recently expanded by including many younger members, while at the same time a number of members who had been involved in the surveys for many years have withdrawn from the working group's activities due to their age. As discussed at the group's workshop held in Sarajevo in May 2025, the informal rules (or 'rules in the head') according to which the group has worked together successfully for years should therefore be put in writing.

Who can participate in the working group's activities? What is the 'boundary rule'?

Everyone from European countries (incl. Turkey and Israel) interested in conducting surveys of local political actors can participate in the working group. However, the current members of the group from the country from which the newly interested person originates should be consulted before the person is included.

Who decides about the topic of a new survey (project)? What is the 'aggregation rule'?

It is up to those who are interested in a specific thematic focus of a survey (or project) to carry it out using their own resources. It is up to the members to decide whether or not to participate.

Who will be responsible for sending out the questionnaire (by email) and for data management?

Right from the start of developing a questionnaire, it should be clear which partners will be responsible for sending out the questionnaire (by email) and for data management. If this is not clarified, a successful and time-efficient implementation of a survey and analysis of the collected data is in question.

Partners who take on these tasks should be equipped with the necessary technical and human resources. For taking on these tasks, partners should be offered the opportunity to become co-editors of the common publication based on the survey.



How will the questionnaire be constructed? What are the ‘access rules’?

Those who will invest resources (time and money) mobilised by themselves in conducting a survey have the right to suggest questions and items for the questionnaire. However, in order to keep the length of the questionnaire as short as possible, the following rules must be applied:

- The questionnaire should only contain questions and items that will be used in a contribution to the common publication resulting from the joint undertaking.
- The questionnaire should only contain questions and items in which various partners express an interest.

Who is entitled to use the data collected by a survey – and when? What are the ‘payoff’ and ‘scope rules’?

Those who have invested resources (time and money) mobilised by themselves in conducting a survey are the first to have access to its results. Specifically, this means the following:

- Only those who have invested resources in conducting a survey are entitled to contribute to a common publication in which for the first time results of the survey are published.
- This publication only contains chapters in which the results of the survey are presented in a comparative way. In other words, this first common publication does not contain chapters presenting findings for only one country.
- Once this common publication is in print, data set will be made publicly available – and can thus be used by everyone.
- Before this date, partners are not permitted to use the data set for publications in which the data is used for cross-country comparisons. This applies also to PhD thesis and studies done by students of the partners because this means that control over the data set cannot be ensured. Control over the data set prior to its public release is crucial, because it may contain data that could potentially violate data security regulations in the countries covered by the survey.
- However, partners are free to use the data collected for their country for own publications (either in the language of that country or in other languages) before the data set is made publicly available.

Rules for bringing the common publication into print

All partners who have mobilised resources for conducting the survey have the right to publish a contribution (chapter) in the common book.

There are no restrictions on certain scholarly approaches or methods used in the contributions to be submitted for a common publication.

However, each contribution (chapter) to the common book must first be reviewed by the editors of the common book. At this stage, the editors must pay particular attention to ensuring that there is no overlap in content between the chapters submitted by the partners, but also to



ensuring the scholarly quality of the chapters, which will subsequently be sent to external reviewers.

Each chapter has to be reviewed by at least two reviewers who are not involved in the survey and publication.

One of them should be familiar with the activities of the working group and review all chapters of the publication (as Henry Bäck and Bas Denters did it for the last publications). Familiarity with the activities of the working group is crucial, because reviewers have to be aware that partners who have made such an international survey possible can reasonably claim to contribute to the joint publication. This reviewer should also comment on all chapters to help the editor avoid overlaps and make cross-references between chapters. This reviewer should also be familiar with different scholarly approaches to answering the research questions raised in the chapters, and also with the relevant methods used to answer them, and should also be able to appreciate these different scholarly approaches and methods.

The second review should be selected in accordance with the specific research questions of a chapter and the method used to answer them.

It is the responsibility of the editors of a common publication to assess the appropriateness of the reviewers' comments and to persuade the authors to take convincing comments from reviewers into account when revising the chapters to ensure scholarly quality of the publication.

The editors of a common publication are to be selected from among the partners involved in the survey and publication. When making the selection, if possible, a gender balance and also a mix of experienced and younger promising partners should be taken into account. Experienced partners among the editors who are well connected and recognised within the scientific community can be crucial when it comes to recruiting reviewers. In addition, they (as recognised academics and long-standing friends) can be important when it comes to convincing partners to revise submitted chapters. When selecting editors, it must be clear to everyone that they have to give top priority to completing the common publication in the fulfilment of all their responsibilities.

Only publishers who publish the common publication in English and also make it publicly available for many years are suitable for launching it.